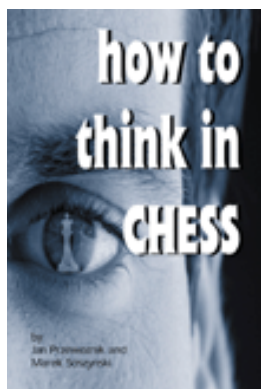




COLUMNISTS

Opening Lanes

Gary Lane



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1-866-301-CAFE

Opening Lanes is based in large part on readers' questions. Do you have a question about a particular opening line? Baffled by a branch of the Benoni or Budapest? Submit your questions (with you full name and country of residence please) and perhaps Gary will reply in his next *Chess Cafe* column...

Yes, I have a question for Gary!

Beauty and the Beast

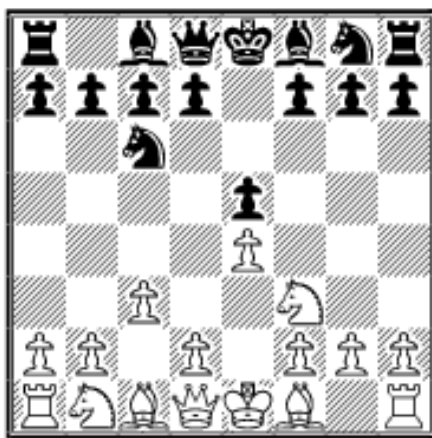
David Bronstein is a gentleman chess player who is always pleading that chess should be considered an art and tries to play brilliant games to make his point. The reality is that the majority of professional players are only interested in another point towards 1st prize and by necessity use some openings to have a dull but slight advantage so they can use their technique. It is probably fair to call such openings beasts but what about beauty? Well, it can come in all shapes and sizes including apparently in the form of the Ponziani opening. Indeed, I am often sent games where the reader invites me to find out what went wrong in the opening. Therefore, it is a treat when I receive a game with the accolade "... this game is really the work of art as something to marvel at and enjoy". Boris Yudovin, New York, USA e-mails with the message "I am a member USCF. I have a question about the Ponziani Opening. The theory claims that it is rather slow, but I would like to represent a game played in correspondence chess where White has a different opinion! I'd name this game 'The Trap'. From the beginning it's clear this is a royal hunt



with many traps and shots. Small wonder this game is really ‘the work of art as something to marvel at and enjoy’.” Well, after that introduction it had better be good!

S.Kaouras-R.Vorlop e-mail 2003

1 e4 Nc6 2 Nf3 A standard response by those who don't want Black to play his pet line in the Nimzovitch after 2 d4. **2...e5 3 c3**



Lucena mentioned this move in his book published about 1497. After all that time you would think the Ponziani would be refuted or exhaustively analysed but new ideas are still turning up. Grandmasters Ljubojevic, Miles and Velimirovic have all tried it

with varying success. **3...d5** The best move available before White tries to build up a pawn centre. It is fine to allow the queen to move early after capture on d5 because now that there is a pawn on c3 then a knight cannot go there and gain time by attacking the queen. **4 Qa4** White pins the knight and in turn threatens the e5 pawn. **4...f6 5 Bb5 Nge7 6 exd5 Qxd5 7 d4 7 0-0** is considered the main move in this line. For example: 7...Bd7 8 d4 a6!?! (8...exd4 9 cxd4 Ne5 10 Bxd7+ Qxd7 is equal) 9 c4 Qf7 10 d5 Nb8 11 Bxd7+ Nxd7 12 Nc3 Nf5 13 b4 gave White the superior chances, S.Hassan-B.Amin, Cairo 2003. **7...e4** There are a couple of bishop moves available with 7...Bd7 being the old continuation. 7...Bg4 is currently popular at international level. For instance J.Koch-J.Piket, Monte Carlo 1999 continued: 8 Bc4 Qd7 9 dxe5 Nxe5 (Black is content to allow the exchange of pieces to lessen the

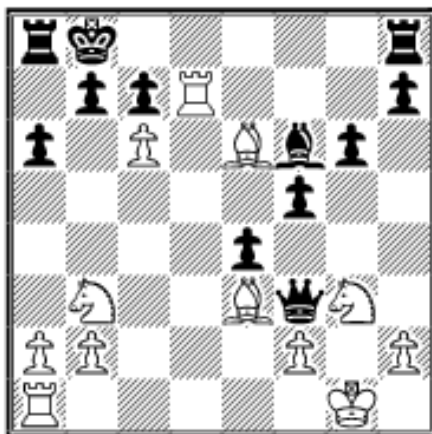
attack) 10 Bb5 Nxf3+ 11 gxf3 c6 12 Qxg4 cxb5 13 Qxd7+ Kxd7 with a slight edge although the game was eventually drawn. **8 c4** 8 Nfd2 Qg5 9 Kf1 a6 (or 9...Bd7 10 Nb3 Qf5 11 Nc5 a6 12 Be2 Nd5 led to roughly equal chances in Z.Mackic-D.Perovic, Belgrade 1994) 10 Na3 axb5 11 Qxa8 Qg4 12 Nc2 (12 Nxb5?? allows Qd1 mate) 12...Nd5 13 Ne3 Nxe3+ 14 fxe3 Bd6 15 Nxe4 Qd1+ 16 Kf2 Qc2+ 17 Nd2 0-0 gave Black good attacking chances, R.Ovetchkin-A.Hamatgaleev, Pskov 1998; 8 Bc4 Qh5 9 Nfd2 Bd7 10 Nxe4 (10 Qc2 f5 is slightly better for Black) 10...Nxd4 11 Qd1 Qxd1+ 12 Kxd1 Bg4+ 13 Kd2 (13 f3? allows 13...Nxf3 and Black is on top) 13...Ndc6 14 f3 0-0-0+ 15 Ke2 Bf5 16 Bd3 Ne5 gave Black the advantage in O.Roething-J.Capablanca, New York 1910. **8...Qd7 9 Nfd2 Qxd4 10 0-0** Also possible: 10 Nb3 Qd7 11 Nc3 Qg4 12 0-0 a6 13 Nd5 axb5 14 Qxa8 Nxd5?! (14...bxc4 is the right move inviting complications with equal chances) 15 cxd5 with the better position, Ahrens-Morjan, Correspondence 1989. **10...Bd7 11 Nc3 a6 12 Nb3 Qe5 13 c5 f5 13 ...Rd8!?** is a decent possibility **14 g3 Ng6 15 Rd1 Be7 16 Bc4 Nd4**



I bet Black must have been thinking this would be an easy win. However, now White fights back with great energy. **17 Qxd7+!** In the circumstances this is the best practical choice and it inspires White to play very aggressively. **17...Kxd7 18 Be3 Nh4** Or 18...f4 19

Bxd4 Qf5 20 Bxg7+ Kc8 21 Rd5 when I prefer White's chances. After 18...Kc8 then 19 Bxd4 traps the black queen in the middle of the board. **19 gxh4 Kc8 20 Bxd4** White has three pieces for the queen and the

initiative. The problem for the German player Vorlop is that his pieces lack co-ordination. **20...Qf4 21 Be6+ Kb8 22 Ne2 Qf3 23 Ng3 Bxh4 24 Be3 g6** If 24...f4 then 25 Nd2 traps the queen. **25 Rd7 Bf6 26 c6**



26...b5 Black is in an awkward position because his pieces lack harmony. It is not easy to find a way out because 26...b6 walks into the quiet but deadly 27 h3 intending Nd2 winning. For instance: 27...Bxb2 28 Rb1 Bc3 allows a neat finish upon 29 Nd2 Bxd2 30

Rxb6+! cxb6 31 Rb7 mate. **27 Rd5 Re8 28 Nc5 Bg7 29 Rad1!** White creates a mating net by threatening Rd8+. **29...Ka7 30 Rd7 Be5 31 Bxf5** White has an embarrassment of riches in this spectacular position. E.g. 31 Ncxe4+ Qxe3 32 fxe3 Rxe6 33 Nc5 also wins. **31...gxf5 32 Nb7+ Qxe3 33 fxe3** Now that White has won the queen back his extra material gives him a winning advantage. **33...f4 34 exf4 Bxf4 35 Nd6 Bxd6 36 R1xd6 Kb6 37 Rd1 Re6 38 Re1 e3 39 Rxh7 Rae8 40 Rg7 Kxc6 41 Re2 Re5 42 Nf1 Kd5 43 Kg2 c5 44 Rg3 Kd4 45 h4 c4 46 Rxe3 Rxe3 47 Nxe3 Kd3 48 Kh3 Kd2 49 Nd5 Kc1 50 Rg2 Re5 51 Nf4 b4 52 h5 Kb1 53 h6 Re8 54 Kg4 Rh8 55 Kg5 c3 56 bxc3 bxc3 57 Rh2 c2 58 Nd3 1-0**

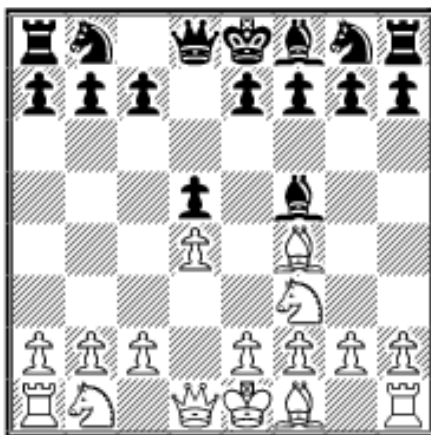
If anyone has had success with the Ponziani or any other openings mentioned in Lucena's 1497 book then send them to me.

"Please give a recommendation for White against: 1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 Bf5. Is it better for White to play 3 c4 or 3 c3? Thanks". Lloyd M. Uhler, Jr. Dallas Chess Club Member

An intriguing question and Lloyd also mentioned he was playing the London System (1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Bf4) so I have tried to adapt a suitable reply to keep in tune with his opening repertoire.

Cees Van Bohemen-Fritz Van der Wal Leeuwarden 1992

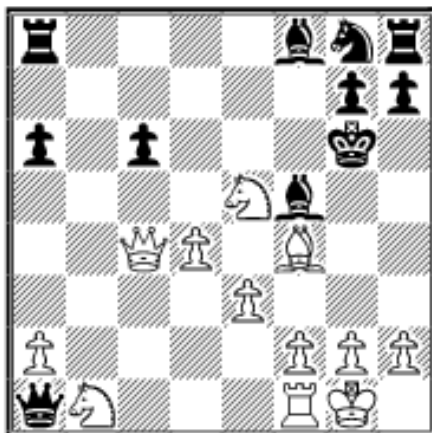
1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 Bf5 3 Bf4



This is consistent with following a set-up similar to the London System by activating the queen's bishop to its traditional square. 3 e3 is a line that I have discussed before on this site. A number of Colle players wanted to know about the early excursion of

the light-squared bishop and I suggested 3...e6 4 Bd3 Bxd3 5 cxd3 intending to develop, castle and play a later e3-e4 or 5 Qxd3 to immediately threaten Qb5+ and continue to develop before advancing the e-pawn. Alternatively, White can transpose into the comparatively well documented Baltic Defence after 3 c4, which I think objectively, is the best bet. For instance V.Ikonnikov-M.Heindrich, Wiesbaden 1999, continued: 3...e6 4 Nc3 Nc6 5 Bf4 (for London System players the bishop on f4 will be familiar and the real difference is the early c2-c4) 5...Bb4 6 e3 Nge7 7 Rc1 Ng6 8 Bg3 Bg4 9 h3 Bxf3 10 Qxf3 0-0 11 cxd5 exd5 12 Bd3 Re8 13 0-0 Nce7? (Black is struggling but this tips the game heavily in White's favour) 14 Nb5 Rc8 15 Nxa7 Ra8 16 Bxc7 Qd7 17 Bb5 1-0. **3...e6 4 e3 c5?!** A natural response to challenge the centre but with the bishop on f5 this idea is flawed. **5 Bb5+?! 5 Bxb8!** is worth remembering because Black has lashed out

with the c-pawn in a few games and now after 5...Qxb8 (5...Rxb8 6 Bb5+ Ke7 7 dxc5 is very good for White) 6 Bb5+ Kd8 leaves the black king looking rather silly. **5...Nc6 6 0-0 Qb6 7 c4 a6 8 Bxc6+ bxc6 9 cxd5 Qxb2?** The pawn proves too tempting for Van del Wal. 9...exd5 is the sensible alternative with equal chances. **10 dxe6 Qxa1** Or 10...Bxe6 11 Nbd2 cxd4 12 Nxd4 is better for White because of his lead in development offering more attacking chances. **11 exf7+ Kxf7 12 Qb3+ c4?** Black is losing but this merely invites the white queen to wreck havoc by exposing the c6 pawn. Of course 12...Be6 is met by 13 Ng5+. **13 Qxc4+ Kg6 14 Ne5+ 1-0**



Black resigned rather than face the indignity of mate in three.

I would like to tell everyone that 3 Bf4 is the best way to enjoy short, sharp games but I would be economical with the truth. In fact, it is a reliable choice but there is a

tendency for the games to peter out to draws at international level. The following heavyweight encounter is an indication of the sort of game to expect:

Ulf Andersson-Ivan Sokolov Ter Apel 1995

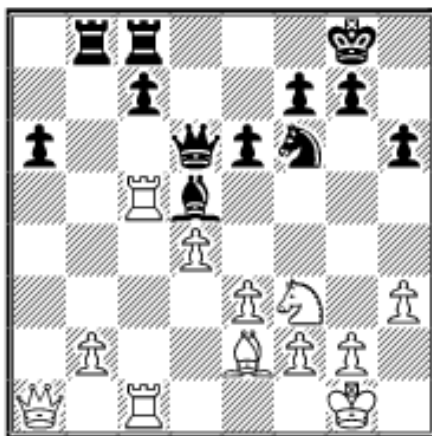
1 Nf3 d5 2 d4 Bf5 3 Bf4 The Swedish grandmaster was rated at 2630 at the time and his opponent was rated even higher! However, it does show this opening system is a viable weapon where White plays very safely but can also push for victory. **3...e6 4 e3 Bd6 5 Bxd6** White is content to exchange bishops so that he can get on with developing the rest of his pieces. Also possible: 5 Ne5 Nd7 6 Nd2 Ngf6 7 Ndf3 0-0 8 Nxd7 (8 Bd3 Bxd3 9 Qxd3 is nothing special for White)

8...Qxd7 9 Ne5 Qa4 10 c3 Qxd1+ 11 Rxd1 led to equal chances in J.H.Vasey-M. Keetley, Sea Mills, Bristol 1972. Or 5 Bg3 Nf6 6 Bd3 Ne4 7 0-0 Nxd3 8 hxd3 Nd7 9 Bxf5 exf5 10 c4 (perhaps 10 Qd3 is worth checking out when play might continue 10...g6 11 Qb5 winning a pawn) 10...dxc4 11 Qc2 g6 12 Nbd2 0-0 13 Nxc4 Be7 14 Rac1 with advantage, H.Schulz-G.Mainka, Dortmund 1986. **5...Qxd6 6 c4**



Andersson puts pressure on the d5 pawn in order to try and exploit the bishop being on f5 by introducing the possibility of Qb3. The quiet move is 6 c3 when play might continue:

6...Nf6 7 Nbd2 Nbd7 8 Be2 h6 9 h3 (a very cautious move which does little to enhance White's position) 9...0-0 10 0-0 c6 11 a4 e5 12 dxe5 Nxe5 13 Nxe5 Qxe5 14 Nf3 Qc7 15 Bd3 Bxd3 16 Qxd3 with a level position, B.Vager-L.Stanczyk, Koszalin 2001. **6...dxc4** Alternatively, 6...c6 is a solid response when 7 Nc3 Nd7 8 cxd5 exd5 9 Bd3 Bxd3 10 Qxd3 Ngf6 11 0-0 0-0 12 b4 gives White a slight edge although the game eventually ended in a draw, C.Hoi-J.Nilssen, Copenhagen 1996. **7 Bxc4 Nf6 8 Nc3** White can develop smoothly with few concerns. This has the benefit of avoiding the latest theory and falling for a sneaky trick but in general a lot of games drift to a draw. Andersson revels in quiet position and steadily increases the pressure. **8...0-0 9 0-0 Nbd7 10 Rc1 a6 11 h3 b5 12 Be2 h6 13 a3 b4 14 axb4 Qxb4 15 Na4** White targets the lone c-pawn and that sets up the theme for the rest of the game. **15...Rfc8 16 Rc4 Qd6 17 Qa1 Be4 18 Rfc1 Bd5 19 R4c2 Rab8 20 Nc5 Nxc5 21 Rxc5**



The pressure against the c7 pawn continues and the next stage is to add the queen to the c-file. The game

concluded: **21...Rb6 22 Nd2 Ne4 23 Nxe4 Bxe4 24 Qa3 Bd5 25 Bc4 Bxc4 26 R1xc4 c6 27 Qc3 Qd7 28 b4 Qb7 29 Kh2 Qb8+ 30 g3 Qb7 31 h4 Kh8 32 h5**

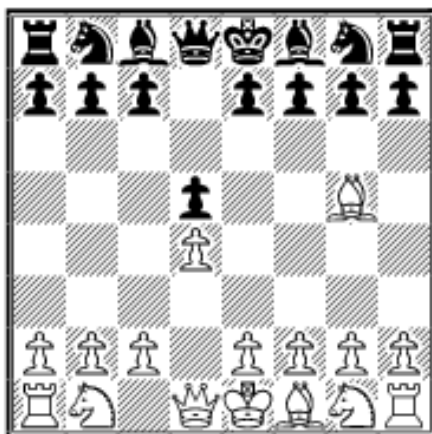
Rb5 33 Kg1 Rxc5 34 Rxc5 Kg8 35 Qc4 Kh8 36 Kf1 Kg8 37 Ke2 Qb6 38 Kd3 Kf8 39 Kc3 Ke7 40 e4 Kd7 41 Ra5 Ra8 42 Kb3 Ra7 43 g4 Kc8 44 f4 Kb8 45 Rc5 Rc7 46 f5 exf5 47 gxf5 Qb7 48 Re5 Qc8 49 Qc5 Kb7 50 Qd6 Qg8 51 Re7 Rxe7 52 Qxe7+ Kb6 53 e5 g5 54 e6 fxe6 55 f6 Qb8 56 d5 Qg3+ 57 Ka4 Qf3 58 Qc5+ Kb7 59 Qxc6+ Ka7 60 Qd7+ Kb6 61 Qxe6+ Kc7 62 Qc6+ Kd8 63 Qd6+ Kc8 64 Qxa6+ Kd7 65 Qe6+ Kd8 66 f7 Qd1+ 67 Ka5 Qa1+ 68 Kb5 Qf1+ 69 Kb6 Qf2+ 70 Kb7 1-0

Anthony Bee from **Great Britain** writes “I’ve been playing the Pseudo-Trompowsky (1d4 d5 2 Bg5) with success for a while now. However, I have a couple of questions about the following line: 1d4 d5 2 Bg5 f6 3 Bf4 Nc6 4 Nf3 Bg4 and now 5 Bg3. In the two games, which I can find on this line, neither black player took the knight on f3, damaging white’s pawn structure and allowing the move & e5. I am puzzled as to why this is, as this looks like a reasonable move for black. Also, if black does take on f3, should I recapture with the e-pawn or the g-pawn, and what would be my plan?”

Well, I think Black taking the knight on f3 will only help White to develop more quickly. In a bid to answer our question and also enlighten other players to the opening I present the following game:

Antonio Fernandes-Nuno Rodrigues Portuguese Championship 1996

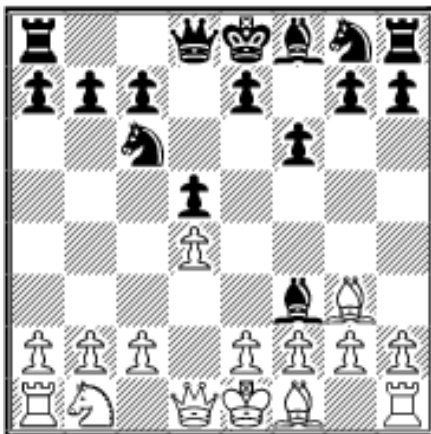
1 d4 d5 2 Bg5



This is known as the Pseudo-Trompovsky. It looks odd but has been adopted with success by Adams. Anand and Hodgson. **2...f6** There are plenty of alternatives but Black immediately decides to try and push back the bishop. Naturally,

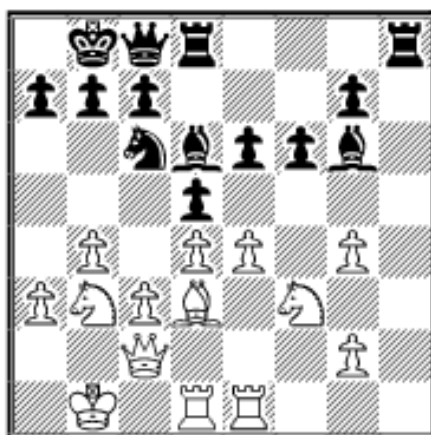
2...Nf6 3 Bxf6 is a standard

Trompovsky. For those who want to know a little more about the opening here are a few examples to inspire White: 2...Nc6 3 e3 Qd6 (3...Bf5 4 c4 f6 5 cxd5 Qxd5 6 Nc3 Qd8 7 Bh4 Nb4 8 Qa4+ Nc6 9 d5 when the pinned knight gives White a winning position, B.Finegold-E.Ruelas, Detroit 1994. 4 Bf4 e5 5 dxe5 Nxe5 6 Nc3 (White is already better) 6...c6 7 Qd4 (7 Qh5! looks even stronger) 7...f6 8 0-0-0 g5 9 Bg3 Ne7 10 Ne4 1-0 J.Hodgson-J.Shepley, London 1990. Or 2...h6 3 Bh4 c5 4 dxc5 Qa5+ 5 Qd2 Qxc5 6 Nf3 Bf5 7 Nc3 e6 8 e4 Bh7 9 Bb5+ Nc6 10 exd5 exd5 11 Nxd5 Rc8 12 Nc7+! 1-0 I.Hecimovic-Ascic, Velika Gorica 2002. **3 Bf4 Nc6 4 Nf3 Bg4 5 Bg3 Nh6** A sharp continuation, which aims to exchange white's dark-squared bishop. Or 5...e6 6 e3 Nh6 7 h3 Bh5 8 Be2 Bf7 9 c4 Nf5 10 Bh2 a6 11 Nc3 White is getting on with the job of developing 11...Be7 12 Rc1 Bd6 13 Bxd6 Nxd6 14 cxd5 exd5 15 0-0 Ne7 16 Na4 0-0 17 Nc5 with a small initiative, I.Nei-R.Sherbakov, Jyvaskyla 1994. Your question concerned the move 5...Bxf3



and I think the best reply is 6 exf3 to activate the light-squared bishop when play might continue: 6...e5 7 dxe5 Nxe5 (7...fxe5 8 Bb5 gives White a strong initiative against the e5 pawn) 8 Be2 Bd6 9 f4 Ng6 10 f5 Nf8 (10...Ne5 11 Bh5+ is good for White) 11

Nc3 gives White an edge. By the way 5...Bxf3 6 gxf3 is met by 6...e5 with equality. **6 c3 e6 7 Nbd2 Nf5 8 Qb3 Na5 9 Qc2 Qd7 10 e3 h5** Black is playing very aggressively and seeks to undermine White's kingside. **11 h3 Nxc3 12 fxg3 Bf5 13 e4 Bh7 14 Bd3 0-0-0 15 0-0-0** White is playing rather adventurously and emerged from the opening with decent chances. **15...Kb8 16 Rhe1 Be7 17 b4!?** 17 Re2 aiming to double rooks on the e-file is a safe alternative. **17...Nc6 18 Kb1 Bd6 19 g4 hxg4 20 hxg4 Bg6** Or 20...Bg3 21 Re2 Ne7 leads to a double-edged position where compared to the actual game Black's forces are better placed. **21 Nb3 Qc8 22 a3**



22...Ne7? Perhaps due to the confines of his position Black goes astray with fatal consequences. **23 e5 fxe5 24 dxe5 Bf7 25 exd6** White is now a piece up and victory is merely a matter of time. **25...cxd6 26 Ng5 Bg8 27 Nd4 e5 28 Nf5 Qc7 29 Kb2 Rc8 30 Bb5 d4 31 c4**

Nd5 32 Ne4 Rh2 33 Nfxd6 Rd8 34 cxd5 1-0

And now for something completely different: **Shaun Press** from **Canberra, Australia** was once a possible

competitor to the domination of the world chess software market by 'Fritz' and 'Crafty' but for some reason 'Vanilla Chess' never quite made it. He writes, "While going through the logs of an old chess program I had written I came across the following game:

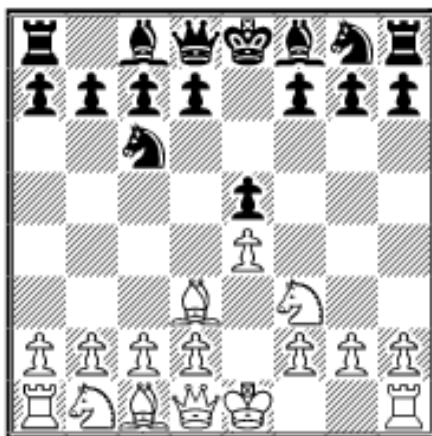
Vanilla Chess-Merlie ics.onenet.net 1997

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bd3 Bc5 4 O-O Nf6 5 c3 Ng4 6 b4 Bxf2+ 7 Rxf2 Nxf2 8 Kxf2 d6 9 b5 Ne7 10 Qg1 Ng6 11 Bc4 Qf6 12 d4 exd4 13 Bg5 dxc3 14 Bxf6 gxf6 15 Nxc3 Bd7 16 Nd5 O-O-O 17 Nxf6 Nf4 18 Kg3 Ne2+ 19 Bxe2 h5 20 Qxa7 c6 21 Qa8+ Kc7 22 b6+ Kxb6 23 Rb1+ Kc7 24 Qxb7 1-0 mate. Is the idea of 3 Bd3 followed by c3, Bc2 and d4 or b4 a new twist on an old setup in Double King Pawn openings, or is there something my computer program is missing? By the way is 10 Qg1 the sneakiest move you have ever seen?"

I can tell that Shaun is smiling when he asks the last couple of questions but surprisingly quite a few people have mistakenly imitated Vanilla Chess.

Fatima Zangata-Dollmar Perez Women's Olympiad Istanbul 2000

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bd3



The bishop on d3 is not the best square because it hampers the development of the queen's bishop because the d-pawn cannot be advanced. It is usually played by juniors or by those who are new to the game. However, I can see where his idea in the question comes from because I have played the

respectable line 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 c3 Nf6 4 Bd3. Once again, it looks weird but White has time to slip the bishop back to c2 before continuing with d2-d3 or d2-d4. **3...Bc5** I was surprised to find it had been played at the World Seniors Championship at Bad Wildbad 1993 between E.Durrieu-O.Scheyt. That game went: 3...d6 4 0-0 Be7 5 Qe2 Bg4 6 Bb5 an admission that the opening has not been a success. 6...Nf6 7 Bxc6+ bxc6 8 d3 d5 9 Bg5 dxe4 10 Bxf6 Bxf6 11 Qxe4 Bd7 12 c4 0-0 13 Rd1 Re8 14 c5 Rb8 15 Nbd2 Rxb2 16 d4 Rb4? (16...exd4 is simple and good) 17 a3 exd4 18 Qd3 (18 axb4 Rxe4 19 Nxe4 is fine for White) 18...Rb5 19 Nxd4 Bxd4 20 Qxd4 Rb8 21 Nf3 Qc8 22 Ng5 f6 23 Qc4+ Kh8 24 Nf7+ Kg8 a possible improvement is 25 Qd3 (it is easy to be clever after the game but 25 Nh6+ Kh8 26 Qg8+ Rxc8 27 Nf7 mate is an improvement) 25...Be6 at this point the players sensibly agreed a draw in time for dinner. **4 0-0** The perfect place to spot the Vanilla opening is an under ten tournament and here is a typical game. 4 Nh4 Qxh4 5 g3 Qf6 6 Bc4 Qxf2 mate 0-1 I.Gruhler-J.Timmermann, Ueberlingen 2000. When Black grows up to become a star player I will have the credit of being the first person to recognise his talent and publishing the first game. **4...Nf6 5 Nc3 d5 6 Re1 d4 7 Na4 Be7 8 Bc4 a6** Spot the threat! **9 Ng5 0-0 10 b4 b5 11 Nxf7 Rxf7 12 Bxf7+ Kxf7 13 Nc5 Nxb4** Black has a winning advantage and just has to steer clear of trouble. The game concluded: **14 c3 Nc6 15 Qb3+ Ke8 16 Nd3 dxc3 17 Qxc3 Qd6 18 f4 Qd4+ 19 Qxd4 Nxd4 20 fxe5 Nc2 21 Bb2 Nxe1 22 Rxe1 Nd7 23 e6 Nf6 24 Nf4 Bb7 25 e5 Nd5 26 Nh5 g6 27 Nf6+ Kf8 28 Nxh7+ Kg7 29 Nf6 Nxf6 30 exf6+ Bxf6 31 e7 Re8 32 Ba3 Kf7 33 Rf1 Ke6 34 Re1+ Kd7 35 Rf1 Bxe7 36 Rf7 Ke6 37 Rf2 0-1**

Has anyone developed software that has produced novelties like this in the opening that you think should be shared with the world? If so keep them to yourself.

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Gary wants your questions on openings!! Send it along and perhaps it will be answered in an upcoming column. Please include your name and country of residence. [Yes, I have a question for Gary!](#)



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